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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the initial phase of a teacher preparation model for first semester college juniors whose career goal was to be a special educator. The McKay Campus School is an IGE (Individually Guided Education) school. The college interns worked with students aged 6 to 14. The integrated program allowed for the operation of IGE on two levels, one within the elementary system and one within the field of higher education. Emphasis in the early part of the program was placed on reading and language, affective education, individualized instruction, and group teaching experiences. Ultimately, the college intern developed two prescriptive programs, one for a primary-age child and one for an intermediate-age child (competencies exhibited during this part of the program are listed in the document), and taught a mini-learning experience packet for a group of elementary-age children. (JA)

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A Competency Based Special Education Teacher Preparation Model: The Integrated Program

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This article deals with the initial phase of a teacher preparation model developed for first semester college juniors whose career goal is to be a Special educator.

The Special Education teacher preparation model, that is, the Integrated Program, was designed by the faculty of the Special Education Department at Fitchburg State College. Four teams, each made up of fifteen students and two faculty members, worked in community schools. The team at the McKay Campus School is the focal point of this article.

The term college intern refers to the college student. The term student refers to the elementary children at McKay Campus School. The term faculty indicates college faculty of the Special Education Department.

The team at the McKay Campus School is composed of fifteen interns who are first semester juniors. One college faculty team member is a reading and language specialist. Psychological education is the area of specialization of the second faculty team member.

The "integrated program" was introduced during a three week orientation program held on the college campus for all teams. The major emphasis of this phase was on reading and language development (18 lecture hours). The content design also included an intro-

duction to the following areas: organizational design and planning (6 hours); observation systems (3 hours); group dynamic techniques (6 hours); learning styles (3 hours); instructional media (3 hours); social studies (3 hours); creative arts (3 hours); math methods (9 hours); and science methods (5 hours). The entire faculty of the Special Education Department taught during orientation, the initial formal education of the college intern. Faculty members from other departments within the college also shared strengths within their academic areas.

The content presented during orientation was expanded upon during formal learning seminars scheduled daily at the campus school. Major emphasis was placed on reading and language, affective education, individualized guided instruction, and group teaching experiences.

The McKay Campus School is an IGE (individually guided education) school with an enrollment of 900 students. The college intern worked with students ages six to fourteen from the four units.

All McKay school personnel were involved in the design of the program and were encouraged to participate in its operation. More directly involved were the principal, vice-principal, special education coordinator, guidance counselor, bi-lingual educator, instructional media, speech therapist, unit leaders and the curriculum specialist.

The students participating in the program were identified by the unit leaders and the teachers. This referral was based on teacher judgement and initial screening utilizing the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development Test. An indepth anal-

ysis of learning needs and the development of a prescriptive program were planned by the college intern.

During formal seminars the reading/language content was presented sequentially beginning with the pre-reading period. This included defining reading as a physical process, a neurological process, a language, a social and a cognitive process. Emphasis was placed on reading as skill development and reading as it relates to the other communication arts. The college intern analyzed the students learning styles and diagnosed behaviors in relation to each component of the reading sequence. The intern then developed and taught individual programs based on this analysis. A structured communication system between the college intern, the college faculty, and the teacher allowed for a formal carry over of skill development and successful learning experiences for the child during the integrated day.

The psychological education content included a study of self-image building, self-concept in relation to group interaction, value clarification, achievement motivation, group dynamic techniques, and organizational strategies to program for such learning within the specific content area of reading. The college intern studied the theories related to these area and experienced a number of techniques within the team itself, as well as operationalizing these techniques while working with the students.

Upon completion of one semester of the integrated program, the college intern developed two prescriptive programs, one for a primary age child and one for an intermediate age child. During this educational experience the intern observed the children

in various academic and recreational settings, assessed academic and social needs through formal and informal tests and observations, designed programs based on assessment data, implemented teaching strategies for a three-month period, and designed a six-month program for these students.

The competencies exhibited in the completion of the above task include:

1. The analysis of children's academic, social and emotional needs, based on the following test administrations (by college intern):

   a. Gates-McKillop Reading Diagnostic Tests
   b. Diagnostic Reading Scales by George D. Spache
   c. The Listening-Reading Series by Donald Durrell
   d. Gates-MacGinitie Reading Readiness Test
   e. The Pupil-Behavior Rating Scale by Helmer Myklebust
   f. The Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development: Word Attack.

2. The analysis of Verbal and Non-Verbal Interaction during the teaching/learning process (supervised daily), knowledge of the effects of body language, spacial sensitivity, affective interaction and alternative teaching strategies based on individual differences.

3. The development of educational organizational skills such as, writing daily plans which included stating objectives behaviorally, designing processes to achieve the content objectives, writing evaluations of content and process; analyzing classroom management strategies; writing block plans; organizing weekly plan book; and designing self-instructing, self-correcting individual student packets.

4. Communication in the form of planning, sharing perceptions of students' problems, needs and accomplishments with unit leaders, classroom teachers, special service personnel (guidance counselor, health educator, speech therapists, bi-lingual consultant, special educator and administration) and consulting with college faculty for content area growth and supervisory feedback.

The college intern developed and taught a mini-learning experience packet for a group of six elementary age students. The packet was based on the academic skills and social interests of these six stu-

dents. Some of the packets included experiences in the areas of:

Creative Listening	Social Skill Development
Dance	Creative Art
Music	Black Studies (Africa)
Film	Physical Safety
Story Plays	Community Involvement

Classroom management strategies and small group interaction processes were assessed and analyzed by college intern-faculty team.

The college intern completed a one-week practicum for an academic growth experience based on a personal interest area. The intern's choices included:

Home Economics	Industrial Arts
Physical Education	Mathematics
Elementary Counselling	Science
Teaching English as a Second Language	Homeroom
Creative Arts	Language Arts

This integrated program allowed for the operation of IGE on two levels, one being within the elementary system and one within the field of higher education. The major emphasis of this program is a competency based teacher education model. One of the obvious additional outcomes is the measured gains of the elementary students progress in reading.